

9/21/17



Northwest

Carroll County: Cottonwood, silver maple in the bottoms and along the rivers are changing to a golden yellow. The white ash are starting to show their purplish/maroon colors on the upland slopes. Sumac along roadways, Virginia creeper and poison ivy vines in trees are showing their dark red colors. Soy bean fields have started to turn to yellow leaves with some fields having already dropped their leaves.

In the Quad Cities roadside areas: Mowed areas remain green. Dogwoods and sumac are generally maroon with some sumac showing scarlet colors. Splashes of yellow from goldenrod and wild sunflower. Occasional light blue from chicory; occasional white from Queen Anne's lace; occasional pinkish purple from thistle. In the fields: Predominantly dull green as crops begin to mature. Large patches of various shades of yellow and light brown in soybean and corn fields

Forests: Walnut turning yellow with leaves falling. White ash turning pinkish purple. Vines (grape vine, Virginia creeper, poison ivy) starting to turn from yellowish orange to scarlet. Urban: Most notable are red maples showing sporadic scarlet colors. White ash (autumn purple ash) turning pinkish purple.

Northeast

McHenry County: Cottonwoods have started to yellow and drop leaves. The sumac are nice and red. Most foliage is still green.

Prairies in northeastern Illinois are gorgeous in late September. Visitors can enjoy the russet big blue stem, yellow goldenrods, and purple asters. Trees are just beginning to turn with hints of color in maples and hackberries. Native shrubs including nannyberry, serviceberry and sumacs are adding their own flair to the landscape at Volo Bog State Natural Area, Moraine Hills State Park and McHenry Dam.

Extremely dry September weather in Will County has caused much premature fall color. In forested areas: Bottomland species including cottonwood, elm, soft maple, and hackberry are all showing yellow and browns from the bottoms of trees up. Walnut have yellow and falling leaves. Oaks are still green, but a have a hint of yellow on dryer sites. Sumac and ivy are red. In urban areas: Soft maple and pear varieties are turning burgundy. Honey locusts are yellow and falling from drought stress. Burning bush shrubs are bright red

North Central

In the broad spectrum around the LaSalle County area, there is more yellow in the tree lines. This has to do with hot, dry weather in the Starved Rock region lately. Ash, redbud, elms, wafer ash, cottonwoods, basswood and walnut all seem to be showing yellows. Some sugar maples are spotting with branches turning more to fall reds and oranges, with the rest of the tree still quite green. These are trees with their vascular systems under some stress like a possible wilt disease or insect attack. Some white ashes are also turning red/purple and this is most likely due to emerald ash borer activity. A lot of oaks in this area have leaves that have turned splotchy brown and are hanging or falling from the trees. We have had several leaf diseases persisting from the wetter conditions during the early and mid-summer. Soybean fields are drying down and changing color quickly. Insect activity is heavy in the warm afternoons, so bring some repellent if you plan to hike to see the colors. Spiders are building webs across the trails and in the open prairie areas; hikers should carry a spider switch to knock them down. Hikers have seen some nice swallowtail butterflies this past week in the wildflower patches, and even a few scattered monarchs. Milkweeds are drying down to yellows and grays and are exposing their big green seed pods. Smooth sumac continues to show great color in patches along the roads, aa are some of the dogwood shrubs.

West-Central

In the McDonough County area, reports show a lot of early color and leaf drop in with very dry conditions. Cottonwoods have dropped most of their leaves. Some sugar maples are showing nice reds, orange and yellow, while others are fully green. Sassafras and sumac are showing lovely reds. Elm are starting to turn yellow. Buckeyes are turning orange and dropping leaves. White ashes are showing some purple (with a few trees totally purple) and green ash are starting to turn yellow. Walnuts are turning yellow and dropping leaves quickly. Oaks have not yet started to turn.

Calhoun, Pike, Adams, Scott, Brown, Macoupin, Greene, and Jersey Counties: Fall colors are starting a month earlier than normal due to dry weather, though most of the landscape is still 60 – 70 percent green. There is a noticeable color change in understory and mid-story species (sumac, dogwood, creeper vines - red; sassafras and sugar maple - red/orange/yellow); as well as isolated color changes in canopy species (sugar maple are red/orange/yellow; ash - purple/red/yellow; walnut-yellow; sycamore,

cottonwood, silver maple, and hickory - brown/yellow). End-of-September weekends should be good for color drives.

Central

Menard/Mason County: A bright yellow color is showing in the walnut, hackberry and cottonwoods. The sumac is a lively red. Orange, red and purple are showing up on dogwoods, sassafras; yellow and purple on the ash. Oaks still not showing anything. The river bottoms do not have much color yet.

Soft maples are turning yellow north of Springfield, north to Peoria. Locust trees are golden with touches of green. Sassafras are starting to turn into rich reds and yellows. Maples tree leaves are turning orange and red.

East Central

In Coles County, the fall color is limited, but in other parts of east central Illinois, the stress from dry weather continues to add to the early fall color. Black walnuts are turning yellow, as well as hackberry, silver maple and cottonwood turning a dull yellow. Green ashes are turning yellow, with a few white ashes showing more of a purple. Some sassafras and sumac are turning red, as well as poison ivy and Virginia creeper. In exposed or extremely dry areas, hickory trees are turn yellow or orange, and in some cases leaves are already brown. In similarly drought-stressed areas, sugar maples are turning orange or yellow, as well.

South

Clinton County: Some sweetgum, green ash, cherry, black walnut, and sycamore leaves are turning yellow. The sassafras and sumac continue to turn shades of red. Recently, a few Virginia creeper vines are starting to turn red.

Effingham and Marion Counties: Deep red colors in sassafras, Virginia creeper, and poison ivy are really showing up. Sugar maples are yellowing a bit early this year on the edge of many forests due to dry conditions. Hickory started showing some yellow color this week. White ashes are showing reddish purple color while green ash are yellowing, along with walnut. Walnut and stressed green ash are dropping many of their leaves already. Goldenrod is peaking with yellow, and some asters are showing some purple in prairie plantings around the area. Sumac has a deep red that stands out in old fields and prairies.

Wayne County: The hot weather has kept leaves from continuing to turn much, with a lot of green, but it's dulling and there is a good amount of yellow and brown. Walnuts are losing a lot of leaves. Hickories are browning/yellowing, sassafras is a mix of red/orange and green, ash is turning purple/yellow early and losing a lot of leaves

Randolph County: Fall colors are starting to show on some trees, but most are being stimulated by drought stress. Flowering dogwood is turning red, mulberry is turning yellow and many have already lost

all their leaves; white ashes are turning reddish-purple, and sumac is turning bright red. Most others are still green.

Pope County: Leaves are dropping early due to dry conditions. However, there is more color in the low-lying areas and some starting to change on the uplands. The maple trees are turning yellow-orange-red, sumacs are turning purple-red, walnut-yellow, paw paw in the understory are turning yellow, and some purple is seen in dogwoods. Most of the upland trees are still green, but surveyors are beginning to see some hickory trees turning yellow. Colors should continue to become brighter over the next few weeks, but it seems that dry conditions are going to cause the leaves to drop quickly.